Review of Internet Service Policy

3838. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry is planning to revise the policy on Internet services in the country;

(b) if so, whether the Government have asked the TRAI to study the same and submit its recommendations;

(c) the factors that necessitated for review of Internet service policy of Government;

(d) the number of Internet service providers in the country, State-wise;

(e) whether any consultations have been held with them about the proposed policy change; and

(f) if so, the outcome of consultations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Government is planning to revise the policy on Internet Services in the country. Government has sought recommendations of Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) on Internet Services with a need to address issue of large number of ISP licenses, grey market operations, level playing field *vis-a-vis* other telecom service providers.

(d) As on date total number of Internet Service Providers are 379. State/ Telecom Circle-wise details of ISP licenses is given in the Statement. (*See* below).

(e) TRAI has released a consultation paper on 'Review of Internet Services' on 27-12-2006. TRAI has also conducted an Open House discussion with Stake Holders in New Delhi on 08-02-2007.

(f) TRAI is in the process of finalizing its recommendations on 'Review of Internet Services'.

Statement

State/circle-wise details of ISP licences

(A) Number of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) with service area "All India" (Category-A): 63

(B) State-wise details of Internet Service Providers (ISPs) with Category 'B' and Category "C" service area.

Sl. No	Name of State/ Telecom Circle	No. of Service Providers
1	Assam	11
2.	Andhra Pradesh	25
3.	Bihar	05
4.	Delhi	13
5.	Gujarat	33
6	Haryana	19
7.	Himachal Pradesh	05
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	09
9.	Kerala	11
10.	Karnataka	22
11.	Maharashtra	48
12	Madhya Pradesh	04
13	North East	04
14.	Orissa	10
15.	Punjab	13
16.	Rajasthan	15
17.	Tamil Nadu	27
18.	Uttar Pradesh	31
19.	West Bengal	11
	TOTAL:	316

NOTE:

(i) Category "A" SERVICE AREA: This covers the territorial jurisdiction of the Union of India except specified areas that may be notified to be excluded from time to time.

(ii) Category "B" SERVICE AREA: Any of the 20 Territorial Telecom Circles, four Metro Telephone Districts of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta or Chennai and four major telephone districts of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad or Pune are Category 'B' service areas. The four Metro Telephone Districts (Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai) are not part of any Telecom Circles, whereas the four major Telephone Districts (Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune) are part of respective Telecom Circles.

(iii) Category "C" SERVICE AREA: Any Secondary Switching Area (SSA) of DOT with geographical boundaries as on 01-04-1998, will form a separate category "C" Service Area with the exception that each of the four Metro Telephone Districts of Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Chennai and of four major Telephone Districts of Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Hyderabad and Pune of the DOT with geographical boundaries as on 01-04-1998 will form a separate category "B" Service Area.

Rural Direct Exchange Lines Scheme

3839. SHRI N.R. GOVINDARAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of villages connected under the Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDEL) scheme, State-wise; and

(b) the financial implications thereof for the last three years?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) entered into an agreement with Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), Reliance Infocomm Limited (RIL), Tata Teleservices Limited (TTL) and Tata Teleservices Limited (Maharashtra) (TTL-MH) in March, 2005 for provision of Rural Direct Exchange Lines (RDELs) on demand in 1685 commercially unviable Short Distance charging Areas (SDCAs). Department of Telecom maintains data for circle-wise installation of RDELs under this scheme. The telecom Circle-wise details of number of RDELs provided as on 31-03-2007 are given in Statement (*See* below).